

Deep Sea Diver Has Ups and Downs



TAKING COURSE . . . Pvt. Howard D. Leshner, son of Mrs. Helen Hatfield of 1340 West 219th street, is enrolled in the Radio Repairs' Course at Camp Gordon, near Augusta, Georgia. Prior to his enlistment in 1948, Leshner was employed at National Supply Co.

Wood, Montague To Attend 1949 Kiwanis Confab

Dr. Howard A. Wood, and J. Parky Montague, president and vice-president, respectively of the Torrance Kiwanis club, and their wives will attend the 1949 Kiwanis International convention in Atlantic City during June 19-23.

Dr. and Mrs. Wood will board the California-Nevada District special train which is carrying delegates from the west to the convention.

They will return via New York, Chicago, and Yellowstone Park and are scheduled to return here July 16.

The Montagues will make the trip by automobile taking various side trips to points of interest enroute and return.

Kiwanians and their families totaling some 12,000 in all are expected to "meet on the Boardwalk"—they will be representatives of the vast service organization numbering some 200,000 business and professional men functioning in 3,000 clubs, and which has grown from a small nucleus in early 1915 to its present great size and civic-minded strength.

Club representatives from all the districts will attend business sessions and listen to leading speakers discourse on Kiwanis and on vital social and state problems from an international standpoint. Election of international officers likewise will be conducted at the convention.

Meanwhile, the ladies will be enjoying numerous social functions planned for them in Atlantic City.

MOVABLE TYPE

It is believed that the Koreans developed movable metal type 50 years before Gutenberg printed the bible.

The Dick Jones family of Harbor City has more ups and downs than most people.

For Richard, looking for all the world like a man from Mars in his 150 pounds of gear, earns the family bread and butter in the far reaches of Davy Jones' locker.

He's one of about 40 harbor area deep sea divers who battle seaweed, seals, bends and what-have-you building docks, ship ways, sewers, water lines, and hundreds of other things under the murky brine.

"It's the greatest thing in the world and I love it," he says, with some difficulty as he sweats profusely in a helmet, breast plate, dress, and weights—put on in his living room for a landlubber's demonstration.

(The way he loves to cavort at the bottom of the sea, you'd think that that guy Davy Jones was a blood relative.)

Dick is held in high esteem by his compatriots to fill the job of president in the diver's local, affiliated with the Pike Drivers, Bridge, Wharf, and Dock Builders Union, No. 2375, of Wilmington.

Jones, busily soaping his wrists to get into that contraption he calls the "dress," admits that things are not all milk and honey in the briny.

"We divers have a motto," he elucidates—"I don't care if I'm the best diver in the world, I just wanta be the oldest."

As he and a couple of amateurs struggle with the breast-plate, Jones admits a suppressed desire.

"You know I'd like to dive for treasure. It's pretty tricky. But I'd sure love to do it." He isn't thinking about the get-rich-quick angle, he's just thinking of the excitement.

Jones very existence as he works putting in a pipe line a 100 feet or more below the ever-moving ocean, depends on one thin, rubber clad line of compressed air.

Jones handles, his intake and exhaust valves with the true care of a veteran. If you don't water flows in, and many a neophyte has come to the surface completely soaked with H2O plus salt.

"You know, a diver's best pal is his 'tender,'" he says. "Our life is in his hands." (The tender is the guy who takes care of the diver's air supply and does a million or more other things that makes his existence livable.)

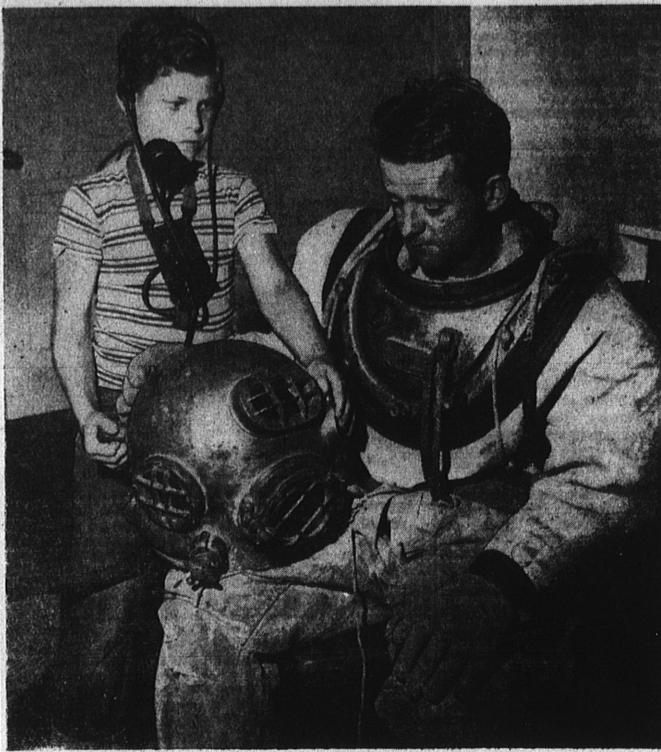
Doesn't a diver ever get lonely working down there among the fish and ever-constant danger?

"We keep chinnin' with the tender," Jones testifies.

But that is far from the tender's chief job.

"We have complete control over our tenders. Our life is in his hands. And no supervisor's dog comes along and fires my boy," Jones iterates.

Besides dressing the diver, the tender gives him his tools, and is expected to anticipate every move of the diver far below. "I would never dive if I didn't have



LEARNIN' YOUNG . . . Bryan Jones, 11, helps his father on with 150 pounds of deep sea diving gear.—Lomita News photo by Bob Wilton.

confidence in my tender," Jones says.

Jones and his fellows are paid by the "dip."

"We get \$41.50 every time we go below the surface," Jones says. "Sometimes it lasts six or eight hours. Over 50 feet, we get more," he states. And employers considering the dangers are glad to pay it.

Besides a kinked hose, the diver's biggest fear is the bends. If he is jerked up too fast, a diver is sure to suffer this strange malady. Under pressure, which increases as you go down, nitrogen in the air turns liquid, the liquid nitrogen turns back to gas and is expelled. If not—

The liquid nitrogen enters veins, and its bubbles cause super-excruciating pain—and perhaps death.

If you're down at 100 feet, the tender—ever faithful—pulls you up slowly to 50 feet. You swing your arms and rest awhile. At 20 feet you do the same thing a little bit longer. At 10 feet, you do the same thing, but still longer. If you have a pressure tank—which most divers don't have—you clamber "into" the thing when you get above.

How do you learn to be a diver?

First you learn how to be tender, and, simultaneously, go through the motions above that the diver does below. You figure out how to handle yourself in the gear and pretend you're glued to the bottom of a salvage vessel like a fly. It takes plenty of savvy.

After two years of this (Jones took three) you're eligible to explore the briny—at your own risk. (You won't be eligible for a heckuva lot of life insurance, if any.)

For instance, you may be assigned to a job (as Jones was) such as the new Edison Co. plant off Redondo Beach.

"It was rough and dangerous," says Jones. "I worked the graveyard shift down below and it was dark as pitch."

"Your main worry, besides a kinked hose, was that you'd get caught between the piling and the pipe."

Sea animals?

Around here, you ward off a few possible seals, and think nothing of it. Jones once was frightened by a manray off Catalina. But get out a little further and you have one terrible worry—the barracudas. "They strike like lightning," Jones says.

The Harbor City ocean-bottom explorer, who has been around these parts since 1923, has a pretty blonde wife and two chil-

dren, Bryan, 11, and Lorna, 5. The Jones' home is at 25901 Market place. He has been prowling around under the waves for the past seven years.

In all that time, his closest call came from his leaky rubber sleeve, which soaked him and caused a vapor lock and a sinus operation.

Most of his work is around the harbor where the water is so murky you can't see your glove hand in front of your face and you work in mush up to your hips. He once did a stint off Catalina where you could see for a hundred yards under water. "Gosh, it was beautiful," he says.

Jones, who worked off the usual purse seiners, tugboats, and diving barges for the army during the war, gets an occasional call to search for bodies, all in a day's work.

But some day, he wants to do something just a trifle more dangerous.

He wants to look for treasure ships which have gone to the bottom in the past.

"That's for me," says the Harbor City diver.

Deadlines Near Veterans Warned

Miss Helen K. Dill, manager of Veterans Service Center, at 1339 Post ave., Torrance, warns veterans of these approaching deadlines:

1. July 25, of this year is the deadline for applications for readjustment allowances for veterans discharged before July 25, 1947. Rumors of an extension by Congress but so far this date still stands.

2. Deadline is next December 31st to take out National Service Life Insurance for those who did not take it out during their service, applications made before this date will not be denied by reason of a service-connected disability less than total.

3. Applications for the Illinois and Connecticut State Bonuses must be in by July 1st, 1949. Veterans living here are warned of these fast approaching dates. Applications are available at Miss Dill's office. The deadline for filing application for the Louisiana State Bonus is Nov. 30, 1949.

Rotarians to See Sport Fishing Film at Meeting

Furnished by the Los Angeles Recreational Center, a sports film on "Fishing at Lake Crowley" will be shown to members of the Torrance Rotary Club during its regular meeting to-night in the Torrance Woman's Clubhouse.

The showing of the film was arranged by Bill Walker, program chairman.

HOME AGAIN
Mrs. Dora Honrath of 1617 El Prado returned recently from Salt Lake City where she had been visiting her sister, Mrs. E. Sturmer, for the past two months.

ATTEND CONFERENCES
Mesdame E. M. Bernaydin, Robert Lenton and C. B. Humphrey attended conferences recently held in Los Angeles.

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